
THE
Massachusetts
MISSIONARY MAGAZINE.

No. 2.] JULY, 1804. [Vol. II.

BIOGRAPHY.

LIFE OF LIEUTENANT JOHN WILLS.

LIEUTENANT JOHN WILLS, late of the royal navy, died in the Lord, October 11, 1764. He had been, as other young men of his profession, gay and dissipated, a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God; and very ignorant of the truths of the gospel, till about four years before his death. He was a young person of good understanding, fond of books, agreeable in his address, and, in his naval capacity, inferior to none of his own standing for judgment and courage; insomuch that he had a lieutenant's commission when he was just turned of eighteen years of age. Just before his last voyage, it pleased God, partly by letters, and partly by conversation with one or two ministers of the gospel, to set him on thinking more seriously than he had been accustomed to do: and it was very remarkable, that soon after the ship sailed, whilst a party were at cards in the cabin, he, being disengaged, took up a treatise on Death; which was the means of making a still deeper and more abiding impression than before. At length, when the fleet arrived at their destined station, tired as he was by that time of the frothy discourse of his brother officers, he, by the great indulgence of the commodore (afterwards admiral) Sir Richard Spry, being his near relation, obtained permission to hire a house on shore; only he was to dine on board. Here he undertook a large piece of ground to cultivate as a garden, for amusement and exercise; and procured leave for twelve of the sailors to work in it, who, with his own man-servant, composed his family. These he called to prayer twice a day, and read the Bible to them, which, according to his little degree of spi-

ritual light, he commented upon in the best manner he was enabled. Whether any real change of heart took place in these sailors or not, I know not ; but this was certain, an outward reformation was visible. They that had been drunkards, swearers, and unclean, became so remarkably decent, regular, and exemplary, that the chaplain told him they were distinguished from all the ship's company, by the name of Mr. W——'s crew. The three years' station being now expired, during which time many letters passed between us of a spiritual nature, he returned to England, and spent the last year of his life with me, under the ministry of the gospel, at St. Agnes, in his native county. His light now increased, and according to that light was his conduct ever regulated. Sensible of his ignorance in spiritual things, he prayed for wisdom from above ; nor did he pray in vain. He asked, and it was given ; for he had to do with a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God. One instance hereof may serve for the whole. On a certain evening, soon after his making an open profession, having been once passionately fond of dancing (in which he greatly excelled) he strove hard with God, in prayer, to shew him not only the unsuitableness and inexpediency, but the unlawfulness and sinfulness of it, as contrary to the word of God, the alone standard of the Christian's conduct. The next morning, without my having known the matter of his prayer the preceding night, or any introductory conversation on the subject, the Lord (no doubt in answer to his petition) directed me to put into his hand, *The Address to Persons of Fashion, relative to Balls, Card Tables, &c.* This, he told me some time afterwards, gave him so clear a view of the matter, that he never had a single doubt more on that head.

His spirituality of conversation, faithfulness in reproving, and zeal for the Redeemer's glory, and the good of souls, were equally conspicuous and eminent ; all proving the real saving work of God upon his soul. To his old companions he ever spoke very closely, when they accidentally fell in his way ; and to those that were more distant, he wrote letters on the most important subject : thus, to one and another, delivering his own soul, he desired to be clear from their blood. A retired life was now his choice, in the full sense of that divine command, "Come out from among them," &c. and his favourite companions were those, who, though poor in this world, were rich in grace. To these excellent of the earth he communicated temporal good things, according to his abilities ; whilst, from their longer experience and profitable conversation, he received spiritual benefit an hundred fold in return. From this time to his last illness, he was unwearied in his visits and labours of love

among the poor, and often held little meetings for prayer and exhortation in the remote parts of the extensive parish where he resided. An epidemic fever, of a most malignant kind, now raging there, did not hinder him from attending the sick ; it rather kept him, as well as myself, in more constant employ than ever. At last, going on a visit for a few days to a relation at a distance, he called on a poor family in the way, all of whom had been ill of the fever ; and though some were on recovery, not one was able to lend the least assistance to the others. The infection was so contagious, and their poverty so great, that it was seldom above once a day a poor neighbour could be found to look in upon them, or to do them the least kind office. In this situation he found them, with one or two upon recovery, and able to eat ; but they had not a bit of bread, only a handful of meal, in the house. It being at a considerable distance from his lodgings, and the place inconvenient for his purchasing immediate sustenance, hearing too of the little meal in the house, he fetched some water from the well, gathered a few sticks near the door, mixed the meal into a cake (such as it was), lighted the fire, baked it on the hearth, distributed it amongst those who could eat, talked to them all (whilst the cake was baking) about the meat that endureth unto eternal life, and so departed, pursuing his journey. But (having, as it was supposed, imbibed the infection) the next day he was taken ill, and immediately set out on his return to his usual abode, but was obliged to stop short at a friend's house ; and, after an illness of three weeks, he was taken to his eternal home. During this time, I do not remember he ever closed his eyes ; but, though very often delirious, was ever talking of the things of God. How did he long to see the dear people of God, at St. Agnes, once more, to take his last farewell ! and how indefatigable was he in pressing his friends and attendants to the consideration of the one thing needful. Even the gentlemen of the faculty, who were called in to his assistance, did not escape his admonitions or reproofs. The youngest of them he delighted to talk to, spending many hours, from first to last, in close conversation with him about his soul's concern. Another, whom he thought a Pharisee, he plainly warned of his danger ; telling him that, notwithstanding all his morality, and Wednesdays' and Fridays' prayers, if he was not converted, he could not enter the kingdom of God ; insomuch that he went away in a rage, and said, "The Methodists had turned the young gentleman's brains ; it was *they* had brought this disorder upon him." At another time, when three of the faculty were present, he asked the eldest, "If he had ever read the book of Job, and if he remembered the history of Elihu, where he reproves Job's three friends ?"

friends?" chap. xxxii. ver. 4—7. The physician answering in the affirmative, he immediately replied, " Give me leave to suppose myself now in Elihu's place, and to address you three; though I may say with him, I am young, and days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom," &c. He then addressed them most closely and faithfully upon the best things: Thus omitting no opportunity that offered, whether in sickness or health, life or death, for the good of souls. One day, being delirious, I proposed prayer, as the best means to compose his distempered mind and body. With this he cheerfully acquiesced; earnestly joined in the exercise; and, when I concluded, continued it himself most fervently, till he fainted away, and fell back on his bed. Soon after he talked to me very composedly about his death, as if it were only a little journey he was soon to take: and directed about his worldly concerns, when that event should take place. He could not bear to see me affected on account of his illness, and approaching change; to me most afflictive, but to himself the border of eternal happiness. At length the hour of his departure came; he was released, and fell asleep in the embraces of God his Saviour, to his eternal gain. Whilst I had to lament the loss of a brother, an *only* brother, and him a *spiritual* brother; in whom (having then no father nor mother, no other brother nor sister alive) all my earthly comfort at that time centered. But the Lord, who removed him to the church triumphant, proved himself, at that trying season, " The Friend that loveth at all times, and the Brother born for adversity."—To his grace be all the praise for evermore. Amen.

LETTERS ON SOLITARY DEVOTION.

FROM PASCAL to JULIA.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR JULIA,

IT is a matter of great importance in an attempt to maintain through life nearness to God in acts of devotion, that we should be deeply impressed with the infinite need in which we stand of the special influences of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as the one incomprehensible Jehovah, is not only fundamental to the Christian scheme, but enters deeply into the whole series of Christian practice. Our faith is very imperfect indeed if this doctrine is left

left out of it. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are brought into view throughout the Scriptures, as performing distinct acts, and efficaciously co-operating in bringing to pass the work of redemption. Yet it is expressly declared that they are *one*. The Arians and Socinians reject this doctrine. They view the Holy Ghost as only a figurative person, i. e. as standing for that virtuous temper which the Gospel produces in all who embrace it. But from this secondary sort of Deism, may you and I, my dear friend, be far and forever removed. To turn the fundamental doctrines of the Bible into figures, is indeed the readiest way to get rid of them, but the loss we sustain is incalculable. Of those holy desires after God, which you now feel, and of which you know, that by nature you are not the subject, there must be some efficient cause. To ascribe them to moral suasion, and means, or some unknown, indescribable self-determining power in man, as the Arminians do, is to go abreast of reason and Scripture. They must have a cause out of yourself. The Scriptures inform us clearly what this cause is. It is the efficient operation of the divine Spirit. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth. All this worketh that one, and the selfsame Spirit." Every lovely feature in the character of the Christian, we are assured, is produced by the Spirit. For "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." All those pious desires which constitute prayer are expressly ascribed to the Spirit. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." I cannot doubt, my dear Julia, but that you feel very deeply your absolute need of the influence of this blessed Agent. Let not this feeling wear away. There is no danger of its leading you into enthusiasm, if it be very strong. This influence we should be most careful not to resist. We should cherish it. We should pray for it with an importunity that knows not how to be denied. And you know we have particular encouragement to do so, in those comforting words of our Saviour; "If ye then, being evil, give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" This blessed agent is rightly styled the Comforter. How comforting indeed are his actings on the soul! How comforting are those promises he has inspired, and those hopes, those discoveries, and that peace in God which he imparts! That your heart may be enriched abundantly with the graces of this Good Spirit is my chief desire in your behalf.

My dear Sister, adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

THE question, you put in your last, my dear Julia, "What is it to pray in faith?" is a very important one in the subject of prayer. In this interesting point the prayers of many real Christians are undoubtedly very deficient. Some appear to have no consistent ideas on the subject. I shall employ this letter in elucidating the point in the best manner that I can. The Scriptures in many places make faith an indispensable requisite in acceptable prayer. Not only is it declared in general, that "without faith it is impossible to please God," but faith is made, by an express application, the great qualifying principle in prayer. Our Lord says, "Whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, *believe* that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Says the apostle James, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in *faith*, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven of the wind, and tossed; let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." And says the beloved disciple, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us. And if we *know* that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we *know* that we have the petitions we desired of him." This faith, which is made so fundamental in the duty of prayer, involves an intelligent and firm belief of the being, the attributes, the government and providence of God. For "he who cometh to him must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Without a belief in God, in his universal presence, his knowledge of our needs, and of our requests, his ability to do for us what we ask of him, and his goodness disposing him to attend graciously to our petitions, prayer would be the greatest absurdity. It involves also a reliance of the heart upon him as that all perfect Being who can, and who alone can sustain and bless us. Hence we find the feelings of pious minds so frequently expressed in the Scriptures under the notion of *trust*. The passages of this kind are so numerous, and must occur so readily to your recollection, that to quote any of them would be wholly superfluous. This faith involves also a belief of the truth of the Scriptures, of the declarations and promises they exhibit, an exclusive dependence on Christ as the only medium of acceptable access to the mercy seat, and upon the aids of the Holy Spirit as the exciting principle of prayer, according to the statement I have already made on these subjects. But besides this general faith, the passages above quoted plainly suggest to us, that

that successful prayer arises from a belief which is yet more confidential and appropriate. We are to be confident that our prayer shall be answered; that we shall receive the blessings we ask for. St. John expresses this matter in terms of great assurance. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask *any thing* according to his will he heareth us. And if we *know* that he heareth us, *whatsoever* we ask, we *know* that we have the petitions we desired of him." Such a confidence naturally results from just apprehensions of God, and a firm faith in the declarations of his word. It is but treating his infinite ability, veracity and goodness according to their nature. It is but to trust his promises with that reliance which is due to them. To doubt, must imply that we do not desire those things which are pleasing to him, or have no established reliance upon his word. But here let us be cautious that we do not mistake. If our desires are not those of holy love, if we pray for any other sort of good than that which he has authorized us to seek, our prayers are not "*according to his will*." They are unwarrantable, and our confidence, if we have any, is mere presumption. They who are supposed to pray in this believing manner, are understood to be friends to God. Their desires are understood to be those of dutiful affection. They ask for nothing but through a regard to God as their supreme good. They adopt his counsels as their guide. All their petitions are ultimately resolved in this, "Not my will, but thine be done." Whatever we know to be contrary to the divine will, for that we cannot pray believably. For we cannot believe that God will do any thing involuntarily; and we know that his voluntary determinations are unalterable. So far as we are undetermined in our own minds, after deliberate consideration, whether some event respecting ourselves or others yet future, be agreeable to the divine will, we cannot pray respecting this event with a believing reliance that God will bring it to pass. If it be such an event as benevolent affection must naturally embrace as a good in itself, and we are yet in doubt whether it is agreeable to the divine will, then we can only pray for it conditionally, i. e. resolving our desires ultimately into the divine pleasure. For many things, and generally for those things which must be uppermost in the mind of a Christian, we have leave to pray *absolutely*; because we have express promises, that if we prayerfully desire them, they shall be given us. An absolute reliance that they will be given us, is but correspondent to the promise. Such as, an interest in the covenant of grace, the pardon of our sins, the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, communion with God, preparation for glory, the ingathering of the elect, the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom,

kingdom, and the execution of all the divine designs. These things, and many others, are made the matter of express promise. Just as much reason then as we have to rely upon the divine veracity, have we reason to place confidence in God, that our petitions for these things will be graciously answered. Nothing can justify hesitation or distrust. In respect to other things not made the matter of express promise, we pray only in submission. In all our petitions then, which are presented "*according to the will of God*, we are authorized to believe assuredly, that God will cause it to be as we desire. It is very probable that at the first spread of the Gospel, when the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were very abundant, and special revelations were by no means uncommon, many Christians had preternatural discoveries respecting particular events, that they were agreeable to the divine pleasure; and, on the ground of such discoveries, prayed for them with the same believing assurance, that they did, or that the most spiritual do now, for things expressly promised. Generally speaking, these extraordinary discoveries are not in these days to be expected; because the discoveries of the divine will are made very clearly and fully in the written word. Here all the good things, which a spirit of ardent piety naturally craves, are holden up to view as matters of express promise to the believing and praying soul. We cannot reasonably desire any thing which these promises do not propose. With respect to these we are authorized to pray with unlimited faith, believing that they will be given to us according to our desire. To disbelieve, to doubt whether God will hear us, is to treat him as a liar. It is to impeach his character in the most tender point. The promise is, "ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will give it you; ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Are not these promises sufficient to justify the confidence of John, when he says "And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask we *know* that we have the petitions that we desired of him?" What propriety then in wavering, distrust, and doubt? If we really doubt whether we sincerely desire those spiritual blessings which the promises respect, then how can we pretend to pray at all? How can we honestly tell God that we do desire them? Are we not afraid of affronting him by a bare-faced hypocrisy? Dare we come into his awful presence with declarations on our lips which we seriously suspect are not true? What motive can we possibly have for such affrontive prayers? But if we are conscious that we do sincerely and deliberately desire those spiritual blessings which he has authorized us to seek, and which are our proper good, what have

have we to justify any degree of unbelief or doubt whether God will cause it to be according to our petitions? But you may perhaps ask, Do I not ardently long and believably pray for enlargement of soul in duty, for increase of gracious communications, and for spiritual consolations, which I do not immediately at least receive? Am I not often denied in my most earnest petitions? To this I reply, that the promises of the Scriptures are the only rule of believing prayer. Christians have a general promise that their graces shall be increased. "To him who hath it shall be given." It is hence suitable for us to pray for increase of grace with confidence, and whatever may be our conclusion respecting ourselves, our prayer most certainly has a gracious audience. But having no distinct promise of any particular measure of the Holy Spirit, or of great enlargements at any particular moment, or of sinless perfection while we remain in this imperfect state, our prayers in all these regards should be conditional. Our will should be submissively referred to the divine. Pious souls may pray in faith when this principle is comparatively weak; and they may have gracious answers to their prayers even when they seem to themselves almost shut out from the divine presence.

I am not sensible that I have left any obscurity on this interesting inquiry respecting prayer. And hoping that these hasty remarks will relieve your mind of all interruptive incertitude on this subject, I take leave again. I am yours, &c.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

TO THE EDITORS.

WHEN a question is manifestly put with a particular view, all persons of discretion are disposed to give the gentleman implicated ample opportunity to answer it. On this principle, it is presumed, that answers to the interesting questions put, vol. i. page 336, have been postponed several months.

1. "Whether a minister can, consistently with that fidelity he owes, and that high responsibility he is under, to the great Head of the church, give the right hand of fellowship to another, by exchanging with him, and inviting him to preach, without some personal acquaintance with him, and satisfying evidence (apart from, and independently of the decision of a council) that he is called of God, and friendly to the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, and the power of religion?"

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Answer. It is lawful, though not expedient nor prudent, for a minister to exchange pulpits with every regular minister of the gospel. For it is not personal opinion, but public, regular ordination, which constitutes a minister. In all public transactions we must be guided by public rules. No man is a regular minister of the gospel, merely because I judge him a good man, and possessed of ministerial gifts. Extraordinary cases excepted, no man is called of God into the pastoral office, aside from the imposition of pastoral hands.

2. "Whether a minister, who exchanges with another, does not by that act approve of the choice his people have made in choosing him, and confirm them in their favourable opinion of his preaching and sentiments, however deficient or erroneous they may be?"

Answer. It is granted, generally speaking, that pulpit exchanges are the signs of pulpit communion, or the fellowship of pastors. Hence it is neither expedient nor prudent for the orthodox to exchange with those who are notoriously heterodoxical. For the exchange of pulpits is calculated to induce people to conclude, that the exchanging ministers are harmonious in their religious sentiments. If the exchange of pulpits imports any thing, it imports some degree of pulpit sentimental harmony.

Hence Christ's ministers must take heed with whom they exchange pulpits, and encourage as gospel teachers. Hence, also, Christ's people must take heed whom they hear, and whom they encourage as ministers by hearing. For, if we neglect gospel discipline, and follow erroneous teachers, we implicitly bid them God speed, and make ourselves partakers of their guilt.

"Knowledge is easy to him that understandeth," and has no end to answer except the interest of Christ's kingdom.

AMICUS.

NARRATIVES BY A YOUNG LADY.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE MISSIONARY MAGAZINE.
GENTLEMEN,

THE following narratives, written by a young lady, comprising an account of a revival of religion in _____, and of God's merciful dealings with her own soul, you are requested to make public; if you should judge them conducive to the benevolent objects of your useful Magazine.

NORVILLE.

IN the spring and summer of the year 1800 there was a greater attention to religion in this place, than ever had been known before. In the fall of the year our Pastor was taken from us by death.

death. After his decease, the religious attention gradually declined, till an unusual stupidity took place, prevailing in a special manner among the young people. This greatly alarmed and called up the attention of the people of God. Considering they had no settled gospel preacher with them, and seeing their youth gliding down the stream of dissipation and carelessness, they felt the power of that command, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works." And I believe they used all endeavours to persuade them from their vanities; but to no purpose. They seemed to be strenuously bent to pursue the inclinations of the natural heart. In the spring and summer of the year 1803, vice and immorality seemed to rise to a greater height than ever. Religion and its followers were often the topics for their sport and ridicule, in their circles. Professors, finding all their endeavours for a reformation prove abortive, felt more immediate dependence on God; and after reminding each other that God says he "will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them," they established private meetings for the purpose of supplicating the throne of grace, for the out-pouring of the Spirit. In the fall of the year the members of the meeting in the centre of the town thought it prudent to open their doors to all, who would choose to attend. Their meetings were soon thronged. At this time God was pleased to send a faithful pastor to guide and direct his flock, who seemed to be an immediate instrument in the hand of God to call forth their attention. Now they meet with no little opposition in their conference meetings. The doctrines of grace, and experimental religion are resolutely and strenuously opposed. The meetings would often have been thrown into the utmost disorder and confusion, had not professors desisted from answering their opponents. There were some, who were so obstinate as not to be willing to attend the meetings, when they were appointed to be at the place of their residence. An instance of a young man I will mention. The account I had from his own mouth.

A conference meeting was appointed at his father's, which he disliked and resolved not to attend; but being constrained by his parents to enter the room, he determined to pay no attention to the performances. But after having several questions asked him, which God was pleased to set home upon his heart, he was put into serious consideration, and brought to a lively sense of his condition and impending danger, while out of Christ. And it is now hoped he has chosen that good part, which the world cannot give nor take away. He is naturally of a lively, facetious turn of mind, and one, who had frequented balls with great delight. But since he has received this change of mind, I have often heard him observe, that he has taken more satisfaction

faction and delight in one religious conference, than he ever did in all the balls that ever he attended. And it would now be as disagreeable to him to join a ball, as it used to be, to hear religious conversation. Now he can say "the way of transgressors is hard," but that the ways of wisdom "are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace."

There are many others who are seriously inquiring what they shall do to be saved; and several who have given evidence of their being brought to the knowledge of the truth.

In the north part of the town the attention is more general. A general solemnity seems to prevail upon the minds of the people, both old and young. Their conferences, which had been kept up for some time past, but reduced to a very few, are now crowded with attentive hearers.

A gentleman who taught the school in that part of the town, the winter past, was often admonishing and counselling his scholars; but it had little or no impression on their minds. On his entering the school the fore part of a week, he put this question to his scholars—*What is God?* And told them he would let them have the week, till Saturday, to consider it; and then he would demand an answer. This put them upon serious consideration; and before Saturday, many of them were the subjects of pungent conviction. This greatly alarmed those, who till now had remained secure; and they soon appeared in general to have a just sense of their sinfulness and opposition of heart to truth. Several of them have given evidence of their being brought out of nature's darkness into God's marvellous light.

The Spirit operates like a *still small voice*. There is no boisterous nor unbecoming behaviour among us. May the Lord prosper and carry on his own work, and put to silence the mouth of gainsayers, for nothing short of almighty power will ever establish religion in the heart of any one.

SUFFER me to exhibit to the candid reader the experience of a young person.

From the early instructions of my parents I had often serious impressions on my mind, while young. The thoughts of death and my perishing condition by nature, would excite in me very painful emotions. Viewing a religious life to be gloomy and melancholy, I strove to put off conviction, hoping if I attended some duties, God would not finally cast me off, if I did not wholly leave my youthful vanities. Thus I remained till about 12 years of age.

A young woman suddenly dying in the neighbourhood, greatly alarmed and called up my attention. I considered I knew

knew not, but I should be the next that would be called, and thought I would not put off repentance any longer. I sat about preparing myself, and attended whatever duties I thought were incumbent on me, especially the duties of the closet. These, I performed so well, I thought, that they must necessarily be highly pleasing in the sight of God. At about the age of sixteen I undertook a school, which I thought would afford a good opportunity for displaying my goodness to the world, and of recommending myself to God. I consequently observed morality in every part of my conduct, and was careful to instruct my scholars in like manner.

About this time on meeting with a cross, which I was obliged to bear, I imagined I bore it with great submission, and was highly exalted in my own opinion, on the account of my supposed humility.

I was brought up under the preaching, I trust, of a faithful gospel minister, and was rationally convinced of the truth of the doctrines of grace, and would often confess that I believed in Christ, and built my hopes upon his merits. The sovereignty of God was a doctrine which I professed to believe, and I ever vindicated it when I heard it spoken against; yet I thought it an unprofitable subject to treat much upon. I thought practical religion was better calculated to civilize and lead us to duty.

At about the age of twenty, on reading the 9th of Romans I felt very disagreeably, thinking all my good works, as I called them, would be disregarded, and that the vilest wretch was as likely to obtain salvation as I was. I now began to search the Scriptures to know whether this were really a scripture doctrine or not, hoping that I might find something to give me ease. But the more I studied the Scriptures, the more I was convinced of the truth of it. This excited in me very painful sensations. I thought I did not know whether I were elected, and that if I were not, all my endeavours to obtain salvation would prove abortive. I therefore thought I would, if possible, put these things out of my mind, and divert myself by studying history and other books. Several chapters in the Bible, in which the sovereignty of God is most clearly held up to view, I resolved never to read again, though for fear of being stigmatized for infidelity, I would not divulge it.

Thus I remained for several months, sometimes tolerably well composed, and then again the recollection of those gospel truths, although I neglected to read them, would disturb my mind. One day on reading a sermon of Mr. Mather's, which treated very closely on the necessity of a renovation of heart, a passage, in which he desired the readers to ask themselves whether they were in a state of nature or grace, took particular hold of

of me. I had ever entertained a good opinion of myself, but could not say I knew that I was in the road to life. I studied upon it some hours before I was able to conclude, and then I had a clear view of my undone and perishing condition. My whole life appeared to be one continual act of rebellion, as flowing from a corrupt heart. Even all my religious performances appeared to have had no other end than my own personal happiness. I saw that I had been "seeking my own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's." I felt myself to be sinful and polluted, but was in hopes that my being sensible of my condition, and my incessant cries for mercy would, in time, be available to my salvation. But alas! instead of growing better I grew worse. Every day brought some new discoveries of my heart. The carnal mind's being "enmity against God," was now not only a scripture, but a self-evident truth. I felt entirely opposed to every doctrine of grace, and even the being & perfection of God. The thought of being in the hand of God was almost insupportable. I wished for annihilation. I thought I should rather suffer eternal punishment than submit to the terms of gospel salvation. The whole Scriptures were pointedly against me. The invitations of the gospel were like a drawn sword; for I found it was my own will that kept me from Christ. I felt myself to be in opposition to every person, who I thought bore the image of God. Often when I had been going to answer, on being spoken to, I have shut my mouth and left the room, for fear I should be left to utter the blasphemous thoughts of my heart. I concealed my distress as much as possible, and sought retirement to give vent to my sighs. I felt myself in the immediate presence of an all seeing God, and was sensible that he would do all his pleasure, which gave me the most exquisite pain.

Thus I remained for several weeks. Every gleam of hope was now almost extinguished. I believed that hell was kindled in my breast, which I was strongly apprehensive would eternally burn. It appeared to me inconsistent with the justice of God to spare me much longer. I was afraid every moment I should be consigned over to eternal destruction. The condemnation of the devils appeared not half so aggravated and just as mine; for they had not, as I had done, slighted the offers of pardoning mercy. My distress rendered me incapable of attending to domestic affairs. I retired, and principally kept my chamber. On taking up Dr. Watts' Psalms, I read the 102d psalm, first part, which to the 7th verse, (the first only excepted) completely spoke my feelings. I now appeared to myself to be a vessel of wrath, "fitted to destruction." Entirely opposed to God and the way of salvation, I thought if it were possible for me to be placed in heaven among the blessed with the

the same heart I then had, I should be in complete misery. I was now in great fears, if my life should be lengthened, lest I should relapse into a state of carnal security. I thought I should rather be then taken away, than go back into the vanities of the world, and was very desirous that God would keep me in a lively sense of my condition as long as he saw fit to continue my life. From this, my mind was led into a long train of thought upon the wonderful condescension of the Redeemer—his taking upon himself our nature, and that while we were yet enemies, he died for us. That he should work out in such a glorious way, our redemption, appeared admirable. The way of salvation now appeared to be every way perfect, wonderful, and desirable, and I found my mind was entirely calm and composed. I was surprised at the alteration that had taken place in so short a time. I was afraid that I was given up, and had gone back into my former stupidity. I did not think of conversion. I had no idea that conversion was, as it were, a visible change immediately discerned by those who are the subjects of it. I endeavoured to recollect and realize the dismal situation that I supposed myself to be in; but my mind would soon return, and I should lose myself in meditating upon the infinite condescension of the Redeemer. I dared not indulge myself in expressing the adoration which I felt, for I thought it did not become such a guilty, vile worm of the dust as I was. I wished that every person might be partaker of the redemption of Christ, if I were not. The Bible appeared to me entirely new. It appeared strange that I had lived to such an age, and read the Bible so much as I had, and never before discovered the beauty, the glory, and the excellence, which were contained in it. I discovered more in one verse, than ever I did before in the whole Bible. I had frequently read the Scriptures and committed some part to memory; but every sentence now seemed to have a new meaning, and I now entertained some hope that God had pardoned my iniquities; but I scarce dared to indulge the thought. On being asked whether I had any new discoveries, I answered that I did not know whether I had received any thing that was saving. I was greatly afraid of being deceived, of falling away, and bringing a wound upon religion. I felt entirely willing to be in the hands of God, and thought I could rejoice in being disposed of as he saw fit. One time, having some discovery of the pride and deceitfulness of my heart, I was greatly distressed for fear I was deluded, and was yet incessantly finning against God. These words came into my mind, "God is greater than our hearts." "And I give unto them (my sheep) eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." However vile and wretched, yet I saw that

God

God was able to deliver me from my thralldom, bow my stubborn heart, and make me "willing in the day of his power." I felt exceedingly desirous that God would search my heart, and let me know whatever wicked way there was in me, and "cleanse me from all secret faults," as well as "keep me back from presumptuous sins." I felt myself exceedingly vile and unworthy. It appeared astonishing to me that I was kept out of hell. I saw such an infinite distance between God and myself, that I scarce dared to lift up my eyes to heaven. All nature seemed to reproach my stupidity. The wisdom and glory of God shone so conspicuously in the natural world, that I was astonished I had never seen it before. Oh ! how excellent were these words, "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Yes, I could see every thing conspiring to declare the wisdom, power and magnificence of God. I thought, what am I, that God should be mindful of me ! Surely I am not worthy of the least of his mercies. O how wonderful is his goodness ! In turning my thoughts on the glorious work of redemption, and contemplating the eternal effulgence and boundless ocean of benevolence, my heart was so drawn out in love to Christ, I thought let my situation be whatever it may, I must forever praise and adore him ; and that if he saw fit to cast me off, I could not help crying, Lord, "not my will, but thine be done." For several weeks, I believe I can say, that God was in all my thoughts. I could no more help praying, than I could help breathing. The worth of souls and the advancement of Christ's kingdom were near my heart. I felt exceedingly desirous I might serve God, and do all to his glory through life, whatever might be my situation after death.

THE PILGRIMS.

BY the signal influence of Providence, the following Pilgrims, *Primus* from Europe, *Secundus* from Asia, *Tertius* from Africa, and *Quartus* from America met and conferred freely relative to the present state of the world, and the necessity of Christian exertions to enlighten millions of the ignorant inhabitants of the earth. The conference was pleasing and profitable; for, in consequence of their different pilgrimages, they were able to communicate information in the most familiar manner relative to the several quarters of the globe.

Primus. Well, brother *Secundus*, it appears you have had the opportunity of several years to explore the gloomy regions of Asia ; and what have you to relate worthy of attention ?

Secundus.

Secundus. Alas, my friend, the Asiatic region, which extends thousands of miles, is full of ignorant and barbarous inhabitants, who are totally unacquainted with the Bible. That vast territory, which was once some part of it favoured with the light of the gospel and the church of Christ, now appears like the shadow of death.

Primus. Are there no Europeans; no Christians in Asia?

Secundus. There are Europeans in Asia; but alas! their object is to acquire property and live luxuriously, rather than to promote the interests of Christ's kingdom.

Primus. But we have missionaries in Asia, who give us some flattering accounts of their success.

Secundus. I am not ignorant of the exertions of your faithful missionaries at the East Indies. But what are these infant ambassadors before millions of old, expert enemies? In no part of the world has Satan more permanently fixed his seat, than among the Hindoos and Brahmans. For they deny all responsibility, and are very superstitious. To see the deluded creatures every day bathing in the Ganges, with unshaken confidence that it will secure their eternal happiness, is enough to extort tears from a stone. It is hoped the missionaries will obtain influence. But, O Lord, how long before the thick darkness of Asia shall be dispelled by the light of the gospel! As we have no reason to expect the miraculous interposition of Providence, Christians have much work to do before Asia will be enlightened. The object will not be obtained by a few youthful missionaries. The arduous work, which must last during several generations, is but begun. The church, yea the whole enlightened world must exert its influence. Zion by the influence of heaven must borrow of the world her silver and gold, and direct her best treasures, before that vast quarter of the globe will be reformed. Heathens will not realize a reformation, except by the united exertions of Christians. It is the salt of Christian example which will season the world. Kings and Potentates must, by pious example and exertion, display the beauties of Christianity, before the heathen nations will seriously attend to the gospel. But let me ask you, *Primus*, relative to the moral state of Europe.

Primus. O *Secundus*, while relating the state of Asia, you have filled me with trembling respecting Europe.

Secundus. Is it possible? For you enjoy the light of the gospel. How highly favoured the Island of Britain, and many parts of the continent!

Primus. We are highly favoured, it must be confessed; but what is this Island, this little speck on the vast chart of Europe, where ignorance and superstition reign without control? What is the moral state of France and her servile connexions? What

the state of Germany and the nations on the Baltic ? And who can think of the moral state of boundless Russia without a shudder ? In a word, the north of Europe is full of frozen stupid inhabitants, who are perishing for lack of vision ; and who is there to reach forth the friendly, guiding hand of the gospel, except Britain ?

Secundus. My own personal knowledge corresponds with the gloomy narrative you have given of Europe. While you cover with your hand Great Britain, and a few other light spots on the map of Europe, nothing remains except a vast extent of thick darkness and the shadow of death. For the Roman Catholic and Greek churches, and Mahometans, are but one remove from heathenism.

Primus. Your views are doubtless correct ; and it is for a lamentation that Europe, the seat of Science, is also the residence of infidelity and moral darkness. What God will effect in the course of Providence by the present missionary exertions, we cannot affirm. But it is a token for good that we begin to wake up, and extend our hand to those who are destitute of gospel advantages. Let us in the mean time hear what Brother *Tertius* has to relate relative to the vast territory of Africa.

Tertius. Africa, my friends, is 4000 miles long and 3000 broad ; and is full of savage beasts and savage men. To attempt the number of inhabitants is like numbering the sands. The savage state of the Barbary powers, of the interior and southern blacks, who are constantly engaged in subduing and selling each other to nations who make merchandize of the bodies and souls of men, is beyond the power of description.

Primus. You give us a dismal picture of Africa.

Tertius. Not more so than corresponds with the state of the inhabitants ; for they act more like the ravenous beasts of the forest, than like rational, immortal agents.

Primus. Are there no hopes of a reformation in Africa ?

Tertius. The missionaries meet with some success. But things will never put on a more favourable aspect, until the nations who now buy and sell the souls of men repent their deeds, and unitedly send them the gospel of God's grace. If the expense and profits of the slave trade were wisely converted to the benevolent purpose of missionary exertions, poor oppressed Africa would soon wear a new face. We really owe Africa many informed guides, because we have deprived her of many ignorant inhabitants. For every slave we are deeply in debt ; and God will not make peace with us ; if we refuse ample restoration : and all the negroes bought from Africa will be swift witnesses against us at the great day. O for the happy days, when the ships of the nations shall visit Africa with missionaries

monies as often as they have come from Africa with slaves. But has *Quartus* nothing to say relative to America?

Quartus. Yes, my friends, I have many things; for we are some of the most distinguished people on earth. From the persecution and oppression of Europe God conducted our fathers, a pious race, to this extensive and fertile territory. Here he planted them. Here they flourished and increased. From a mere handful we have become a numerous and potent nation. The temporal and spiritual blessings with which we have been crowned are innumerable. Health, liberty, peace and plenty, and the blessings of the gospel have been the portion of our cup from the Lord. As our obligations are peculiar, we ought to be distinguished by answerable fruit. But alas! we have dishonoured our Benefactor, and exposed ourselves to his displeasure. We have slighted the gospel of God's grace; and have but partially rewarded the original natives and proprietors of the territory for the land we now possess. We have also been connected with other nations in the purchase of slaves. The Americans are now the possessors of thousands and thousands of slaves, who have an equal right to share with us and other men the blessings of liberty. The moral state of America is not less gloomy than that of some other lands.

Primus. No, it is not; if you have been correct in your statement.

Quartus. That I have been correct, you have liberty to appeal to the facts related.

Tertius. What then must be done? For this is a day when all men are called to action.

Quartus. It is our duty to mourn our sins as a people, to humble ourselves before God, and make the best exertions to diffuse the knowledge of the gospel among those who are destitute of its peculiar privileges.

Primus. It has been remarked that Europe is deeply in debt to Africa in consequence of the slave trade; and is not America also involved?

Quartus. Yes, we are. For not only before, but even since the revolution, we have many of us been deeply concerned in that hateful commerce of human flesh. There are many fresh slaves now in the Southern states, who were lately torn from the bosom of their native land. It must be confessed that the importation of slaves is one of the crying sins of this land.

Tertius. Surely it is: and if I have been rightly informed as to the number of the blacks now in these states, the day is not far distant when God will permit the oppressed wretches on the continent, as he has done on the Islands, to take vengeance on their cruel masters. The natural love of liberty in every breast will soon stimulate the thousands and thousands of active slaves

to

to free themselves with the sword. They only need a leader to concert answerable measures. The weekly parade of a feeble militia at the Southward to deter and awe the blacks must soon prove ineffectual. Informed slaves already know that it is merely specious, and that the moment they universally rally and concentrate, and skilfully direct their strength, that the Southern states must fall before their fury and rage. The day of recompence is at hand !

Quartus. What then must be done ? I feel the weight of your remarks : and believe that Providence will ere long vindicate the cause of those oppressed men, women, and children.

Tertius. It is too late to attempt to retain them in the chains of slavery by hard and severe usage. They have too much information to be influenced by rigid measures. Kindness is the only chord which will hold them ; but the thirst for freedom, which this best of methods excites and inspires, must soon impel them to break over all restraints. They are men, and will be free, or die in the cause of liberty.

Quartus. My blood chills in my veins while I contemplate the danger to which the Southern states are exposed. The debt contracted is great, and must be paid. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay. And shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ?

Primus. But the question still returns ; what must be done ?

Quartus. The American slaves must be treated with lenity and kindness. They must be instructed and made acquainted with the principles of religion. The interest of the African schools must be encouraged by the Americans ; and may we not hope and expect from them some able missionaries for the African regions ? what can rich planters do more pleasing to God, than to qualify some of their most promising negro-lads for missionaries among their ignorant relations in Africa ?

Secundus. I pray that I may live to see qualified Africans returning to their native country to preach the gospel.

Quartus. I cordially join with you. For it is possible for negro missionaries from America to be recognized by their relations on their native ground. Let us then qualify and send them to teach their poor brothers and sisters, if not their aged parents. A young negro of genius in the course of 20 years may be qualified for a mission, and find the place of his nativity in Africa, where he and his family with reviving affections shall recognize each other, and employ the melting interview with the most pleasing narrations.

Tertius. My heart leaps at the mere possibility of so desirable an event.

Quartus.

Quartus. And mine at the increasing probability. For I really believe, if the object of foreign missions be properly encouraged, that some African journal will ere long furnish narratives of more ravishing interviews of this nature in that land of darkness, than the closets of many Christians now anticipate.

Primus. It is the sublime privilege of Christians to contemplate the ability of Providence to effect the most glorious designs; and I will only remark in this luxurious connexion, that when Ethiopian missionaries shall be recognized in Ethiopia by their relations and friends, that the gospel will have free course, and thousands of poor, perishing blacks will be adorned with the white robe of salvation. May the blessing of Heaven attend the African schools: for they, under the guidance of wisdom, will furnish some of the most useful missionaries. The Africans, though now as wild as the beasts of the forest, and frightened at the sight of white missionaries, might easily be induced to embrace their missionary brethren from America. We must convince the poor negroes that we are not enemies, but real friends. Let us then, for God's sake, and the sake of their salvation, educate active young blacks for missionaries, and go with them to their native land, and teach the inhabitants how to live and serve God in their own country. No pledge of our love and friendship will be acceptable, either to the Africans or their Creator, short of Ethiopian missionaries from the oppressive nations. When shall the gains, the immense gains of the slave trade be funded and improved for the support of African missions? In the mean time God grant that every possessor of 100 slaves shall furnish one able Ethiopian missionary for Africa. Soon let the merchants, who buy and sell the souls of men, throw overboard the manacles for slaves, and cleanse their ships of the blood of slaves, and prepare them for African missionaries. For I almost hear the poor Africans re-echo the gospel sound; "How beautiful upon the mountains of Ethiopia are the (black) feet of those who publish the glad tidings of salvation!" Let no one say there is a lion in the way, and that the work is impracticable. For he that believeth shall not make haste. Faith in God will remove every difficulty and surmount every obstacle. Faith conquers all things.

Quartus. But what measures must be adopted by the Americans in favour of the numerous tribes of Indians whose lands we have speciously purchased, and whom we have driven over the western mountains?

Tertius. But why do you hint that the Americans have taken their lands unjustly? For we are informed that the lands have been legally purchased.

Quartus. True, we have formally purchased their territory with a few delusive articles; and no sooner were the poor creatures

tures dissatisfied with the bargain, than we have vanquished them, and driven them into the middle of the wilderness. Instead of enjoying the advantages of the extensive sea board, they are now expelled even far beyond the Allegany mountains. They feel the injury and abuse, and justly complain of the fraud. To consider the Americans as their friends they are afraid; for the experience of generations, they plead, has proved them enemies. What then must be done? For the day of judgment will come, when white people and red people must all stand before the bar of God to be rewarded according to their works.

Tertius. To restore their lands is impossible: but it is not impossible to bless them with the gospel.

Quartus. They will not accept it. The Americans have long attempted to furnish them with the gospel, but except in some solitary instances, it has been rejected.

Secundus. When the Americans take as much pains to enlighten the Indians as they have to possess their territory, and cannot prevail, your observation will be valid. But so long as the object of Americans is to acquire the territory of Indians, rather than to enlighten them, it is in vain to say they will not embrace the gospel. The Indians are wise enough to know, that you are more engaged to possess their lands, than to gospelize their minds and hearts. You must convince them that you love their souls rather than their lands, before they will embrace the Saviour you recommend.

Quartus. But how shall we exhibit evidence, that we love their souls rather than their lands?

Tertius. How? You must actually love their souls, and make their salvation your great object; and the evidence of your love will be manifest. Have you not land enough? Do Americans need more territory? Have you not more land now in possession than you are able to cultivate with advantage? Set then your bounds, and on no consideration pass over them. Call home the roving, straggling Americans, who are now disturbing the Indians. Let the Indians know, by the most sacred and uniform practice, that you will not go beyond your bounds. Surely this can be effected in the course of fifty years or less. Then call them to the line, not to trade with them about their lands; not to cheat them, but to give them the advantage of the gospel. In one word, cease to do evil and learn to do well. Be content with the vast territory you have acquired of the Indians; and let them peaceably enjoy the remaining part of the continent. Be their friends and not their enemies; and the grace of God will not we believe long suffer them to reject the gospel. But alas, how impossible to succeed in gospelizing the Indians

Indians, while the greatest exertions are made by Americans at large to monopolize their lands ! Before we can convince them that we are friends to their souls, we must once prove that we are friends to their bodies. If we are not friendly to their temporal interests, we shall not easily convince them that we are friends to their eternal interest.

Quartus. I have nothing to object to your remarks. You are doubtless correct, and different measures must be adopted and faithfully executed before the Indians will listen to gospel missionaries. They now consider missionaries as the pioneers of their enemies, who are on the march to deprive them of their lands. Alas ! alas ! sad experience has impelled them to dread the hand that extends a gift. They fear and hate white faces.

Tertius. Why, my friend, do you say this ?

Quartus. Because it is truth. The wilderness and the game contained in it are the chief objects of savages. The chase in its connexions is their idol. If deprived of these delights, they feel themselves deprived of all good. While therefore we give them no security for the uninterrupted possession of their lands, and the enjoyment of their game, we cannot expect they will consider us friends. For what is life, without its privileges and enjoyments. I repeat it again ; let the Indians know that the wilderness where they have made their huts, and where they start and pursue their game is their own native property, and that they shall not be disturbed, or in vain do you offer them the gospel. We must secure to them the peaceful enjoyment of the forest, or they will reject the offer of Christian friendship. Poor ignorant creatures, they dream of no residence equal to theirs in the forest ; and desire no enjoyment superior to the savage chase and life ; and shall we not pity them ? Shall we not then permit them to possess their own native territory without any farther interruption ? Do this, and they will not fly before gospel missionaries. But till we do this, they will consider missionaries as their enemies. They as well as other men despise and hate wolves in sheep's clothing. Savages will never become Christians in an enemy's country. In their own peaceful territory only will they embrace the Saviour. Let them then enjoy forever all the wilderness they now possess : for their souls are more valuable than their lands. Let Indians possess the wilderness that Christ may make it blossom.

(*To be continued.*)

THE FOLLOWING IS AN
EXTRACT FROM A JOURNAL
written at sea, in 1803.

EARLY instructed by my fond parents to revere and adore the Supreme Being, as a being who is the former of our bodies, the preserver of our lives, and that God from whom cometh every good and perfect gift ; I had my mind deeply engraven with the true sentiments of morality ; and thinking it was sufficient to ensure my happiness in the world to come, and, in the mean time, the good will of all men here, I had resolved in my own strength to live a life of strict morality. Thus I travelled on for many years, trusting in my own doings for every comfort ; and really imagined I merited every blessing from Heaven which I enjoyed. With this declaration of the old Pharisee, viz. " that I gave tithes of all I possessed," my building (as I then imagined) was on a strong and sure foundation. But alas ! I found my building of no avail in the day of visitation, but a self-righteous garment, one that would not hide my shame. Glory to that God who in some measure has opened my blind eyes, and made me to see what I am by nature and practice ; viz. a poor, miserable, naked, hell-deserving creature. Had it pleased Heaven to have called me hence at that time, I must have been forever banished from that God, whom I am now led to admire and adore for his goodness and mercy to one of the vilest of all created beings. Through the whole volume of inspiration, I cannot find any one brought to the knowledge of the truth without the use of means. It pleased the Almighty Parent to bring about means in calling me to attend on sacred and divine truths. Returning from a long voyage, I had a mind to take a view of the eastern world, partly for my health, which was somewhat impaired, and partly to see the country. Soon after my landing, I became acquainted with a gentleman who treated me with every degree of respect, and receiving a polite and a general invitation to visit his house at all times, I had very oft and frequently called on his family. On one of my visits, I found an acquaintance of theirs at their house ; and among other topics of discourse, which engrossed the evening's conversation, that of religion was assumed. Our arguments ran high against the sovereignty of God ; and although for several times I thought our friend would be entangled, or at a loss for words to support this doctrine, yet she appeared to have the Bible for her support, and texts at her call, which entirely laid the foundation of the Arminian plan on a level with the ground. I then, for the first time, felt my morality to totter, and the sovereignty of God, through a Mediator

giant, as fast taking hold of my mind—a language, which I ever had been a stranger to. However, retiring to my lodging, the Bible was my first attention; and in searching for the truths already pointed at, I saw myself for the first time condemned, and no way for escape. I retired to bed, but sleep was a stranger to my eyes, as I now saw no prospect of tasting that happiness, which I so long had flattered myself I justly merited. At the approaching morn, which I welcomed with joy, I arose, but peace was an entire stranger to my breast. Perish I must, as I saw no way of escape. Thus I continued, wishing for death to relieve my anxious mind, and my proud heart would not let me reveal my feelings to any one, fearing they would laugh me to scorn. As soon as convenient I again repaired to my friend's house, again seeking peace to my mind. As soon as politeness would admit, I resumed our former discourse, and religion was again our theme. When on some points brought to view, our friend remarked, that the language of Scripture plainly declared, "except ye be born again, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God." I then felt condemned by the law and totally despaired of mercy. I now resolved to quit the land and betake myself to the sea. I immediately began my necessary preparations for my voyage, in doing which I took a bad cold, and soon felt the seeds of mortality assuming their seat in my mortal body. I endeavoured to part with my friends with as cheerful a serenity of mind as I possibly could, resolving as far as possible to brave my feelings, but in case they thus should continue, to throw myself into the sea, and put an end to that existence of a creature unworthy to live. Accordingly on the 5th June, 1803, I embarked, but peace did not go along with me. I made the Scripture my constant companion, as all the comfort I enjoyed seemed to flow from that fountain. I continued in this frame for five weeks, feeling my health fast declining, and seeing nothing but death before my eyes, and to die without hope, put me almost in a state of despair; and had it not pleased the Supreme Being and Father of mercies to remove those doubts from my mind, I must have perished under the weight of my sins; but glory to the name of God for thus bowing my stubborn will to his will, and making me bow to the sceptre of king Jesus, and making me see there is no justification but by the blood of Jesus, and renouncing all my former righteousness as filthy garments. I was made to see the sovereignty of God sufficient for me, and that of myself I could do nothing. (Oh poor morality! what wilt thou do, in such trying, dark hours as these?) Will they who imbibe this principle be able to stand at the great day of accounts? (I fear not.) Language is now inadequate to express my present feelings of joy and gratitude to that God, who is willing, who is able to relieve a

heart like mine, and pardon the sins of a guilty criminal. • how I long for the moment of my approaching dissolution, that I may die and be with Jesus, for faith assures me this, that I shall soon behold his glory and see him face to face. Should these imperfect lines fall into the hands of any of my former companions, and be the means of arousing any one from their lethargy, how joyous should I feel! But the Father of Spirits is able to do all things well and at his pleasure, as he can, in his own time, call his elect from the four winds that are under heaven. To his hands I commit my soul, and laying my body down to rest, being assured of a full pardon through the blood of a once crucified but now ascended Jesus, do rest in hope that at the morning of the resurrection I shall be received with the saints to sing hallelujahs in the mansions above.

4th August, 1803.

Thus continued our worthy friend — — —, until the 24th of August, when, giving orders for his burial, and commanding his soul into the hands of that God who gave it, he expired, without a sigh or a groan.

Your humble servant,

B. P.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS M. MAGAZINE.

GENTLEMEN,

THE following meditations and reflections upon *Isaiah i. 27.* are submitted to your inspection. If you think them worthy of a place in your useful Magazine, you will please to insert them.

“Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.”

THESE words of Scripture have somewhat attracted the attention of the writer; and he thinks them worthy of the notice of his fellow Christians, and even of those who are still far from righteousness.—They appear to instruct us in the way and method which God takes to redeem and save his church.

By Zion is meant the church of God. This is the appropriate name by which it was designated under the Old Testament dispensation: and it retains the same name under the New. “We are come,” says an apostle, “unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.” Zion is the place where God has fixed his throne, and that holy hill upon which Christ reigns as king of saints: and it is that which God has promised to make an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

By

By the redemption of Zion is to be understood, the deliverance of the church from evil. Redemption properly imports a deliverance from power of temporal enemies; deliverance from the power of sin and Satan, and also from eternal ruin. And hence it includes all that salvation of which sinners stand in need.

And the way or means by which God effects this redemption, are judgment and righteousness. "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment," by which is meant, infliction of evil, or destruction. The latter clause of the verse appears to be of the same general import with the former. The converts of Zion mean the several individuals of which the church is composed. These shall be redeemed with righteousness, by which is to be understood the rectitude or justice of God displayed in punishing. Now if these things be so, it appears that the prophet meant to teach us this truth, *that the way or manner in which God redeems his church is by the display of his righteous judgments upon the wicked.* And this appears to be confirmed by the words immediately following those under consideration. "And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed."

But is it true, that God will give up and devote the wicked to ruin for the redemption of his church? By looking over the sacred volume, and considering some of the great and leading dispensations of Divine Providence, recorded both in history and prophecy, it will be found, that this is the method which God has taken to redeem and save his church, and that this is the method he will still pursue.

If we look back to the days of Noah, it will be seen, that God then redeemed and saved his church by means of righteous judgment executed upon his and her enemies.

Before the deluge of waters, by which the old world was destroyed, the church of God was brought very low, and her numbers exceedingly reduced. All the righteous persons then on earth, were included in the family of Noah. It does not appear that there was so much as one true convert of Zion to be found among all the thousands and millions that perished in the flood. The whole world lay in profound wickedness; and criminal violence had arisen to that alarming height, that there was danger of the total extirpation of truth and righteousness from the earth. The church was in imminent hazard of being wholly swallowed up and lost, either in the abounding corruption, or by the hand of violence. Nevertheless, God wrought for her redemption, and saved her from the impending evil. But how did he do this? It was by the execution of righteous judgment in the destruction of the guilty. The men of that corrupt and violent generation filled up the measure of their iniquities,

iniquities, and then wrath came upon them to the uttermost. God brought upon them a deluge of waters, which swept them all down to the prison of hell where they have no power to hurt or disturb ; and thus God redeemed Zion by a judgment of water, and saved her converts by a striking display of his righteousness in the destruction of his and her enemies.

By turning a few pages forward in the sacred history, we come to another instance, where the display of righteous judgment was the mean of redeeming and saving the church of God. It was by this Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage, and saved from the power and oppressions of Pharaoh and his people.

That haughty and stubborn enemy of God and his church, held the converts of Zion in the most cruel bondage. And when God sent to redeem them, by the hand of Moses and Aaron, he refused to let them go ; and made them serve with still greater rigour. But God had determined to effect their redemption ; and therefore he began his judgments upon that hard-hearted oppressor and his guilty land, and continued them until ten successive plagues were inflicted. These brought Pharaoh and his servants to a reluctant consent, that the people of Israel might depart. But as soon as they were gone, he mustered his army, and pursued them with desires of vengeance. Nevertheless God still wrought for their salvation. He opened a way through the midst of the sea, that Israel might escape the power of the enemy. Pharaoh, seeing what was done, pursued them into the midst of the sea, with his host, where God shook them off, and involved them all in a tremendous and exemplary destruction. He overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea. He triumphed gloriously, and in the greatness of his excellency he destroyed them that rose up against him. Here judgment and righteousness were the means of the redemption of Zion. God saved his church by destroying their enemies ; and thus got to himself a name which has been declared through all the earth.

The redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and the divine judgments by which it was effected, are very noticeable in the annals of the church. They are events frequently referred to by the inspired writers, and in various ways made to subserve the interests of true religion. The Psalmist mentions them to excite a spirit of gratitude and praise to God as the Redeemer and Saviour of his church ; and the prophet Isaiah refers to them to support the children of God in adversity, and to encourage them to put their trust in him. “ I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy Saviour ; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee ;

thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." This is according to the true proverb, "The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous; and the transgressor for the upright in heart." Zion has been redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness; and this shall still continue to be the case.

In the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, there was another event that took place, which aptly illustrates the sentiment of the Prophet. With this Isaiah was personally acquainted, and it is probable he might have it in view when he wrote the words under consideration.

Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, having subdued the surrounding nations, attempted the invasion of Judah; and sent his servants with a mighty host to lay siege to Jerusalem. Upon this Hezekiah and his people were in great distress, for they had no might of their own to withstand so powerful an adversary. Their hearts failed; and Zion appeared to be in imminent danger of being trodden down as the mire of the streets. It seemed almost impossible that her converts should escape the power of the enemy. But the time had not yet arrived for the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem; and therefore God would not leave them to be destroyed as yet; but determined to work out salvation for them; and he did deliver them from the power of the enemy, and of those that sought their hurt. But how? by the execution of righteous judgment upon the enemies of his church. God sent forth his angel, and in one night, smote in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000 men. This so weakened the power of the king of Assyria, that he abandoned his enterprize, and returned with shame to his own land; whither also judgment pursued him, for he fell by the sword in the house of his gods. Surely judgment and righteousness were the means of Zion's redemption.

This great event appears to be celebrated in the lxxvi. Psalm, where we find the following striking expressions relative to the subject. "In Judah is God known—his dwelling place is in Zion. There break he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and the horse are cast into a dead sleep, Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared and was still: when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. He shall cut off the spirit of princes, he is terrible to the kings of the earth!"

The redemption of the Jews, who composed the church of God, from the Babylonish captivity, is another instance which exemplifies how judgment and righteousness are the means of the deliverance of Zion.

Upon

Upon the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Zion became a desolation ; her ways mourned, because none came to her solemn feasts. The city that was full of people became solitary ; and that holy and beautiful house, where God was worshipped, was polluted and destroyed. For seventy years Zion was laid waste, and became the scorn and derision of every foe. Her converts were scattered among the heathen, where they endured innumerable evils. But when the term of captivity was expired, God wrought for her redemption, and actually saved her from the hands of her enemies, and restored her to her former privileges and enjoyments ; and the way in which he did this was by executing righteous judgment upon her enemies and oppressors. At no period in time, perhaps, did God more manifestly make bare his holy arm before the eyes of all people, in behalf of his church, than then. He overturned kingdoms and empires from their foundations to prepare the way for his people's return. The vast monarchy of Babylon was overturned ; the seat of empire was taken ; her proud monarch and princes were slain, and solemn silence reigned through all her stately palaces. The whole extensive dominion of Nebuchadnezzar fell into ruins, and became subject to the Medo-Persian kings. These new monarchs proclaimed liberty to the captives of Zion, and they returned to their own land, under royal patronage, and Jerusalem and the temple were rebuilt. And thus it was by means of judgment, and the awful displays of retributive righteousness, that Zion and her converts were redeemed. God turned again her captivity, by destroying those that carried her captive.

These are some among the many instances, recorded in the Old Testament, which illustrate the words of the prophet we are considering ; and if we turn to the New Testament we shall find the same line of conduct pursued in the providence of God. Judgment and righteousness are still the means of Zion's redemption.

After the Messiah came, the church of God, which had previously been named by the name of Israel, was called by a new name, which, agreeably to prediction, the mouth of the Lord named. It was called *Christian*. Gentile believers were grafted upon the old stock, and became the children of Abraham, by faith in Jesus Christ. And when the blessing of Abraham thus came upon the Gentiles through faith, the unbelieving Jews were rejected. Having disowned the Messiah they were disinherited. The children of the kingdom were cast out ; they were disfranchised, and the kingdom was taken from them, and given to another people. This excited the enmity of those betrayers and murderers of the Son of God, and they raised

raised persecution against the Christian church, which they pursued with implacable vengeance, doubtless aiming at its total extirpation. The unbelieving Jews were the great instigators of persecution against the church of Christ in every region to which their power extended. By their means, the disciples of Christ were oppressed, harassed, and slain. Christians every where groaned under the evils which their inveterate enemies, the Jews, brought upon them, and they stood in great need of deliverance from their malice and power. Then God wrought for the redemption of his church. He turned his dreadful hand against his former people, but now his enemies, and brought upon them a most awful destruction. Having filled up the measure of their iniquities, wrath came upon them to the uttermost. Their place and nation were taken away ; their city and temple demolished, a great part of them were slain, and the remnant were so dispersed and weakened, that they had no more power to hurt or annoy the church of God. Then had the churches rest on every hand, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied ; and thus it was by means of righteous judgment that God redeemed the converts of Zion from the power of their Jewish adversaries.

And it is by the same means the true church of Christ shall be redeemed from the power and oppressions of antichrist or the man of sin.

The love of pre-eminence, pride, ambition, and a thirst for power, soon produced the grand apostacy in the Christian church, and the man of sin, the son of perdition, was revealed. Soon one arose who exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he, as God, sat in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. This is the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit, or the Roman Pontiff, who arrogates divine prerogatives and honours. He early appeared as the enemy of the true church of God ; and all the horrors of former persecutions were revived. He bore down and wearied out the saints of the Most High, so that the church is represented as flying into the wilderness, and existing in a state of great oppression and obscurity. This has been the case for many ages past, and is still in a great measure true ; though God has begun to work, and is now working for the redemption of Zion. He is bringing his church out of the wilderness ; and we may expect, ere long, he will consume that wicked power with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy it with the brightness of his coming. It is by means of righteous judgment God will redeem his church from the evils she endures from the hands of her antichristian adversaries. The seven vials of the wrath of God, which contain the seven last plagues,

plagues, have been filled up, for the destruction of the man of sin. Some of these vials of wrath have already been poured out upon the beast, and upon his kingdom ; and doubtless they are still running. In our day, we hear of the awful judgments which God is executing upon the papal powers of the world. In the course of a few years past, antichrist has come down wonderfully. His throne has been shaken to its centre ; and his end is unquestionably approaching. But how long it will be to the end of these wonders, is not given us certainly to know. Great things are yet to take place, the vials of wrath are not yet exhausted ; the great day of the battle of God Almighty is yet to come. The sixth vial is most probably now running, and when the seventh shall be poured out, great Babylon, the mother of harlots, shall fall to rise no more. In righteous judgment God will bring her down to desolation, and thus redeem his church from her malice and power.

There is one more event to be considered, which may further illustrate the text upon which we are meditating, and which shall take place when the mystery of God shall be finished.

The sure word of prophecy, as a light, shineth into the darkness of futurity, and gives us some faint discovery of what is to take place before, and at the end of the world. We look for a thousand years of peace and prosperity to the church of God, when all nations shall flow to Zion, and she be made the joy and praise of the whole earth. During these thousand years Satan shall be bound in the bottomless pit, and there shall be nothing to hurt or disturb in all God's holy mountain. But at the expiration of that period, Satan shall be loosed from his prison, and go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather their innumerable hosts together, to fight against Zion and destroy her utterly. And they shall go up on the breadth of the earth, and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and probably be on the point of accomplishing their destructive purposes ; and then shall fire come down from God out of heaven and devour them. They shall be seized, and be brought before the judgment seat of Christ, there to receive their final sentence ; and from thence be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Then shall Zion be redeemed from every evil ; and all her converts be received to that glorious world where sorrow and danger shall be forever unknown.

This is the closing scene, when the redemption of the church of God shall be perfected. Judgment shall finish her deliverance from all her enemies. She shall be saved by their destruction.

The

The several instances now mentioned, it is conceived, illustrate the words under consideration, and show how judgment and righteousness are the means of Zion's redemption. From the beginning of the world to the end of it, these are the means of saving the church from her dangers and troubles.

If a just explanation and illustration of the words of the prophet have been given, the following reflections may be made upon them.

1. That God governs the world for the sake of his church.

All the leading dispensations of Divine Providence are manifestly directed with a view to the redemption, peace and prosperity of Zion. Jesus Christ is exalted and made head over all things to the church; and he directs all things with reference to her good. The great judgments which have been executed in the earth, by which Zion has been redeemed, include innumerable other events which are connected with them, and which have the same design and tendency; and these are connected with innumerable others which are more minute and obscure. Hence, it may not be unsafe to say, that all events that ever have, or ever shall take place, from the beginning to the end of the world, both great and small, have the good of Zion for their object, and are all directed, in divine wisdom, to promote her salvation. An inspired apostle has said, "We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose! This declaration carries in it an assurance, that the government of God extends over all things; and that he directs every event to promote the good of Zion, with all her converts.

This, it is conceived, opens a clear and consistent view of the dispensations of Divine Providence, from the beginning to the end of time. They are all directed towards one single point, the redemption of the church; and in this they shall unquestionably issue. If then we would understand the providences of God, we must view them with reference to the church. Considering them in this light, many otherwise inscrutable mysteries will be cleared up, and appear plain and consistent. If God sends wars, famine, or pestilence abroad in the earth; if he sheds abroad his love and builds up cities and nations, or if he turn his dreadful hand, and bring thousands and millions to desolation, still he is acting for the good of his church. Her redemption is the great object in view; and it shall be promoted by all things that take place in the world, either in mercy or in judgment.

2. How precious and valuable is the church in the sight of God!

The divine government being directed in all its parts for the good of Zion, is an evidence that her safety and interests are exceedingly valuable and important. But what especially evinces her preciousness in the sight of God, are the judgments he inflicts for her redemption. God sets such a value on his

church, that he does not hesitate to sacrifice thousands and millions of his creatures, when necessary, for her sake. Innumerable multitudes of mankind have been devoted to destruction on her behalf. Thus saith the Lord to his church, “ I am the Lord thy God, the holy One of Israel, thy Saviour ; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast *precious* in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee ; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.” The converts of Zion are God’s peculiar treasure above all people. He sets a higher value upon them than upon the whole world besides ; and he would doubtless devote all others to destruction, were it necessary, rather than they should perish.

But wherefore does God thus highly value his church, which includes but a very inconsiderable part of men, and those generally of the meaner sort in the view of the world ? The true answer is, because his own glory, which is of more value than ten thousand worlds, is deposited in her ; Israel is his glory. God has created the church for his glory ; and should she perish from the earth, it would bring dishonour upon his holy name, and be a reproach upon his faithfulness and truth. Therefore rather than such a disastrous event should take place, no destruction can be too extensive, nor any judgment too severe, for God to bring upon the guilty.

If God then sets such an inestimable value upon his church, how exceedingly different does he view her from the greater part of men ! By many Zion is despised, and considered as a nuisance in the earth ; and by innumerable multitudes her interests are totally disregarded. Most men appear to feel no interest in her welfare. They had rather see her sink in the world, and be wholly swallowed up by her adversaries, than make the smallest sacrifice in her favour. Surely their views and feelings must be very unlike to God’s. They cannot be like Christ, who has done and suffered so much for his church ; nor can they be friendly to the divine glory, which is promoted by her prosperity. They must be accounted as adversaries, whose destruction shall advance the redemption of Zion.

3. The righteous judgments, which God executes in the earth, are expressions of mercy, as well as of wrath.

Wrath and mercy in God are not such distinct things as many seem to imagine. They are not contradictory passions or feelings, and opposed to each other ; but they are one and the same indivisible exercise of the divine mind, and are expressed in one and the same dispensation of providence. The same event, in one view, is a judgment, or expression of wrath, and in another view it is a mercy. Towards the wicked calamitous events are tokens of wrath ; but they are all mercies to Zion. This is exceedingly evident from what has been said. It was

in mercy to Noah that God destroyed the old world. It was in mercy to Israel, that he overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. God did this, "for his mercy endureth forever." It was in mercy to Hezekiah, that the angel destroyed Sennacherib's army. It was in mercy to the captive Jews, that God break the Babylonian power. It was in mercy to the Christian church, that he destroyed the Jewish nation. It is in mercy, that God is pouring out the vials of his wrath upon the man of sin. And it will be a display of mercy, when he shall cast Satan, with all his adherents, into the lake of fire and brimstone, and there torment them, day and night, forever and ever. All these dreadful judgments, which God has executed, and will execute upon sinners, in which his awful wrath is displayed, are, at the same time, expressions of infinite mercy, kindness, or love; not indeed towards the unhappy sufferers; but towards Zion, the church and people of God. Towards them who fall, they are severity; but towards the church, goodness. Redemption is unquestionably a mercy towards all the friends of God; but it is by means of judgment and righteousness Zion and her converts are redeemed.

Thus wrath and mercy in God are not opposite things; but the same, a love to holiness, which is hatred to wickedness. And in the displays he makes of his character, wrath and mercy are the same; and they assume these opposite names, only as they are considered in opposite views, or as they relate to the righteous and the wicked. The same thing to one is a judgment, and to the other a mercy.

And in this light, it is conceived, we are to view all the judgments which God executes in the earth. They all have some reference to the church; and it is in mercy to her, that he destroys her enemies. This is the case in this world; and why shall not this be the case in the world to come? The tremendous destruction which is coming upon the impenitent enemies of God, shall serve to display his mercy towards his redeemed church. The saved converts of Zion will feel their ruin to be an expression of kindness towards them; and in this view, they will sing Alleluia, while the smoke of their torment shall ascend up forever and ever.

If this then be so, is it not a desirable thing that all the finally wicked should be forever destroyed? And is it not proper that good men should pray for such an event? Their ruin appears as desirable, as that Zion should be saved with an everlasting salvation; for the one is a requisite mean to accomplish the other. Accordingly good men have prayed for the utter destruction of the wicked; "Of thy mercy, O Lord," says the psalmist, "cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul. Give them according to their deeds; render unto them their deserts." Thus prayed David; and the same is implied

implied in the prayers of every good man, for the salvation of the church. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord."

4. If God redeems Zion with judgment, then, when we see him doing terrible things in righteousness, and executing wrath upon his enemies, may we not expect that he will soon do great things in behalf of his church?

Judgments upon the wicked are tokens of good to Zion. The great deliverances which God has granted his people, have usually been preceded by great and remarkable judgments upon his enemies. This was emphatically the case when he redeemed Israel from Egyptian bondage, and when he turned again their captivity at Babylon, as well as in the other instances mentioned. And indeed, our Saviour has given the destruction of unbelievers as a sign, by which we may know that the deliverance of Zion is near at hand. Having described the terrible judgments which God was about to bring upon Jerusalem for her sins, he said to his disciples, "And, when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." So we, when we see the judgments of God abroad in the earth, may look up, and expect, that he will soon do great things in behalf of his church. By the destruction of her adversaries Zion is to be redeemed; of course, when we see that destruction taking place, we may expect the redemption draweth nigh.

This idea sheds a pleasing light on times of darkness and distress; and is calculated to support the friends of God under the present depressions of the Christian church, and the commotions and desolations that are taking place in the world. This is a day, when great events are brought to pass in the course of Divine Providence. Opposition to the cause of the Redeemer rises high, and unusual calamities befall the nations. But when these vials of wrath shall be exhausted, Zion shall arise and shake herself from the dust, and become the joy and praise of the whole earth.

5. The text which we have considered affords us great certainty, that the church of God shall live through every age; that all her friends shall be safe and happy forever; and that all her enemies shall be eventually destroyed.

The great things which God has already done for his church are considered as earnests of what he yet intends to do. Had he meant ever to abandon her to ruin, surely he never would have done so much for her redemption. The church has survived all the efforts her enemies have made for her destruction. She still lives; yea, and shall live through all ages yet to come. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. He will never leave her nor forsake her. Her walls are strength and salvation. Zion dwells on the heart of everlasting love. She is founded on a rock, and all the gates of hell shall never prevail against her.

her. The heathen may rage, and the people imagine many vain things : the kings of the earth may set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, and conspirators may plot against the Lord, and against his Christ ; but all in vain. God has set his King upon his holy hill of Zion. He will uphold his throne ; and the infinite Redeemer shall rule his enemies with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Zion has been redeemed with judgment upon her enemies ; and by such judgment her redemption shall be completed. Safe and happy, then, are all the friends of Zion. The cause in which they are engaged is the cause of God ; and it shall prevail. Their place of defence is the munition of rocks ; and in all that good which God has spoken concerning Zion, they shall have their part. He will guide them by his counsel, and afterwards receive them to glory. But in how awfully perilous a situation are all the adversaries of the church of Christ ! Theirs is the cause of wickedness. They are contending with omnipotence, and must eventually be overthrown and destroyed. They are marked for ruin, and all the righteous shall rejoice when they see the vengeance.

(To be continued.)

For the MISSIONARY MAGAZINE.

LETTERS

From ADELPHUS to EUSEBIA on modern, fashionable Amusements.

(Continued from p. 17, vol. ii.)

LETTER II.

MY DEAR SISTER,

EVERY character, whether good or bad, has some pleasure suited to its gratification. The miser's pleasure consists in contemplating his gold. Honour is the chief happiness of some. Power is coveted by others, as the greatest good. The exercises of religion afford the greatest delight to the true Christian. What affords pleasure to one, would excite pain and disgust in another. The miser detests the conduct of the spendthrift. The votaries of pleasure consider real religion as insipid and burdensome : while the true Christian studiously avoids whatever tends to draw his thoughts and affections from his Saviour. Every one is willing to have it thought that his pleasure is lawful, and that he pursues it, not merely because it is his pleasure, but because it is right. As it is fashionable to consider the Bible the standard of right and wrong, many frequently apply to it for authority to support their unlawful pursuits. If the unlawfulness of placing supreme affection upon gold be suggested to the miser, he will repeat Christ's direction,

" Let

“ Let nothing be lost.” The sluggard will say, “ Take no thought for the morrow.” And in advocating pleasure you have used the words of Solomon ; “ A time to dance.” If you had properly attended to the design of the royal preacher in this chapter, you would not have found any authority to favour the vain amusements of the young. Should the assassin take a part of this chapter to justify himself, “ a time to kill,” would you think it justly quoted ? If Solomon advocates dancing here, does he not in the same manner seem to speak in favour of murder ? The truth seems to be this. The simple existence of various changes and events is here asserted without any reference to the moral qualities of actions, whether virtuous or vicious. “ To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the sun.” Or if you still think that dancing is here spoken of as innocent, let it be remembered, that it was frequently practised by the priests, and good men among the Jews, not as an amusement, but as an expression of religious affection and zeal. Thus David danced before the Lord, and in the last psalm he calls upon others to “ praise God with timbrel and dance.” You say the Bible expressly requires mirth and joy. “ It is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour.” “ Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee.” “ Rejoice evermore, and again I say, rejoice.” But what, Eusebia, does the Bible command us to rejoice in ? Let us apply to the sacred volume for instruction. “ Rejoice in the Lord.” “ Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.” “ Rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” “ Whom having not seen, ye love, and though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.” This religious joy is experienced in greater or less degrees by every true Christian, and is the immediate and necessary consequence of real religion. The Bible commands none but Christians to rejoice, and it always requires them to rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation.” It never allows of that joy, which shall be “ turned into sorrow in the latter end.” To all but true Christians, the language of Scripture is, “ wo unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep.”

You say, “ It is necessary for Christians to partake of the amusements of the world, lest people, and especially the young, become strongly prejudiced against religion.” This is a very common observation with the advocates of amusements, and therefore, I am the less surprised at your using it. But who, my dear sister, gave you authority to reconcile sinners to religion, or rather religion to sinners ? By mixing with them in pleasure, you can make them friendly to yourself, but you cannot make them love religion, before their natures are renewed. That religion, which gains the love and esteem of the giddy and

and thoughtless, remaining so, is most surely a false religion. True religion requires self-denial, and a holy life ; nor can you make it require less. But while it requires so much, the world will always hate and oppose it. If you really feel concerned for the advancement of religion, let it be your aim to live agreeably to its dictates, and show out of a good conversation your works of meekness. Never expect to reconcile men to light, while they love darkness. By participating in the amusements of your companions, you will make them your jovial friends, but such conduct never gains one friendly feeling towards religion.

Again, you assert that "amusements are necessary as a relaxation." A relaxation from what ? From duty ? There is nothing required of us, but duty. Work is a duty ; to visit the fatherless and widows is a duty ; strict attention to all the institutions of religion, reading, meditation, and devotion, are duties. We have just time enough to perform our several duties. Our duty to God, and those, which more immediately relate to our fellow-men, and to ourselves, require all our time, and all our talents. If one occupation injure our health, it is our duty to pursue some other. The variety of our duties renders unnecessary the relaxation, for which you plead. Agreeably to your sentiments, relaxation consists in variety, and not in idleness.

But the argument in favour of amusements, in which you seem to place most confidence, is, that "many great and good men have advocated them. Men of eminent learning and piety have thought such amusements proper, and even necessary for the young. Is it not, therefore, arrogance for us to declare decidedly against them ?"

It is not arrogance for any one to judge according to evidence, but it is always wrong to place any reliance on the bare opinion of others in matters of religion, however wise or good we may think them. Some "great and good men" believe, as you do, that the heart is by nature desperately wicked ; that almighty power alone can change it ; that God knows all things ; that he governs all his creatures and all their actions ; that Christ is both God and man ; and that the finally impenitent will perish forever. Other "great and" professedly "good men" deny these important truths. Some advocate truth, others advocate error. Some favour amusements, others oppose them. Some practise amusements, others abstain from them. Some go to heaven, others to hell. But as we shall be saved or lost for ourselves, so we must believe and practise for ourselves. We may attend to the evidence collected by "great men," but belief is personal. We must believe the truth because it appears true to us, and not because it appears so to others. The only opinion worthy of our unshaken confidence is that of holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by

the Holy Spirit in them.

the infallible Spirit of light and truth. To this sure word of prophecy let us always apply for instruction. We will attend to the Scripture arguments against amusements in our next.

That you may become wise to salvation is the ardent prayer of yours, affectionately,

ADELPHUS.

(To be continued.)

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By the Rev. Jacob Norton, from several persons in the North Parish, Weymouth	2 37
	113 70

POETRY.

LET others, wrapt in self-conceit,
Boast in their wisdom and their wit ;
Let them extol their gold and dross,
I'll glory in my Saviour's crofs.

While the self-righteous, blind and rude,
Cry up their native rectitude,
I'll seek revenge on all my pride,
And boast in Jesus crucify'd.

While they, with curses on their heads,
Talk of their justice and their deeds,
I choose to sit at Jesus' feet,
And self-abasement is myfeat.

Hither I'm bro't by sovereign grace,
I bless the means, and love the place ;
I bid all earthly joys be gone,
And glory in my Lord alone.

Here could I tarry night and day,
Here could my soul forever stay ;
O may I never, never roye,
Nor glory, save in Jesus' love.